

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 3195

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, SHUM, ET, US
SUBJ: FUTURE OF USAID, ETHIOPIA; HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: A. ADDIS ABABA 3042, B. ADDIS ABABA 3068

1. EVERY RECENT REFERENCE I HAVE SEEN FROM WASHINGTON HAS INDICATED TO ME THAT USG DESIRES TO MAINTAIN AN AID MISSION IN ETHIOPIA (E.G. CAIRO 8401, AND CAIRO 8402). THUS FAR, THIS WOULD ALSO SEEM TO BE INTENTION OF EPMG. GRANTED THAT EPMG PERCEPTION COULD CHANGE AT ANY TIME FOR WHATEVER REASON, AND THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO HAVE MORE CONCRETE EVIDENCE IN FORM OF EPMG PROPOSALS THAN WE HAVE NOW, IT NONETHELESS SEEMS CLEAR TO ME THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS UNCUMBENT UPON US TO TAKE LEAD IN DEMONSTRATING TO ETHIOPIANS OUR WISH TO REMAIN. PRESUMABLY THIS WOULD TAKE FORM OF INDICATING TO THEM OUR WISH TO CONTINUE EXPLORE WITH THEM ASSISTANCE FOR SUCH PROJECTS AS UPPER DIDESSA. IF WE DO NOT DO SO, WE WILL BE INVITING EPMG TO DRAW THEIR OWN CONCLUSIONS AND PERHAPS EVEN STIMULATE A REQUEST THAT AID MISSION HERE CLOSE.

2. AS DEPT AWARE, I HAVE SUBSCRIBED TO CONCEPT THAT
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DESPITE STRAINED RELATIONS, WE SHOULD TRY AND REMAIN HERE IN AS MEANINGFUL POSTURE AS POSSIBLE. I AM THEREFORE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT WASHINGTON ACTION ON TWO RECENT IDA LOANS IN CITING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ETHIOPIA WILL UNDERCUT ANY POSSIBILITY FOR AN ONGOING AID PROGRAM HERE. PROBLEM IS BOTH LONG AND SHORT TERM FOR US--LONG TERM BECAUSE OF IMPLICATIONS FOR ANY AID

PROGRAM AT ALL FOR ETHIOPIA, SHORT TERM BECAUSE WE ARE IN THROES RIGHT NOW OF ATTEMPTING TO WORK OUT A STAFF FOR A TRUNCATED AID MISSION WITHOUT REALLY KNOWING WHAT DEPT AND AID/W HAVE IN MIND, THE STAFFING TO BE SET BY JULY 31. THUS FAR, WE HAVE PROVIDED PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS ON BASIS THAT WASHINGTON DOES IN FACT INTEND TO CARRY ON AN ONGOING PROGRAM, OF A SCOPE SIGNIFICANT ENOUGH TO HAVE IMPACT ON EPMG THINKING, BUT IDA STATEMENT MAKES US WONDER WHETHER THIS IS CORRECT ASSUMPTION.

3. IF ANSWER IS TO TURN ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS, I WISH ONCE MORE TO POINT OUT WITHOUT CONDONING IN ANY WAY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS THAT HAVE OCCURRED AND WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY CONTINUE, RECORD HERE IS MIXED, AND THAT THIS FACT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND IN APPLYING OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. IT HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN OUR JUDGMENT THAT AS ETHIOPIAN REVOLUTION HAS PROGRESSED, THE HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION OF POOREST ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY, PARTICULARLY PEASANTS, IS NOW BETTER THAN UNDER PRE-REVOLUTIONARY REGIME. THESE, OF COURSE, ARE THE VERY PEOPLE CITED AS PRIMARY TARGETS FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE BY CONGRESS, AND IN OUR JUDGMENT REPRESENT A PRIMA FACIE CASE FOR THE SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE STATED BY THE SECRETARY IN HIS APRIL 30 ADDRESS IN ATHENS, GEORGIA, ON HUMAN RIGHTS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT EXCESSES OCCURE IN ETHIOPIA IN NAME OF REVOLUTIONARY JUSTICE ALTHOUGH THEY OFTEN TEND TO BE EXAGGERATED BY PRESS AND MANY OF THEM TAKE FOROM OF RETALIATION BY A GOVERNMENT FIGHTING FOR ITS LIFE
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AGAINST OPPOSITION ELEMENTS THAT ARE EQUALLY RUTHLESS AND READY TAKE "REVOLUTIONARY MEASURES" OF THEIR OWN. NONETHELESS, WE SHOULD NOT LET SUCH EXCESSES OBSCURE ENTIRELY OUR OWN RECOGNITION THAT MANY ETHIOPIANS HAVE BENEFITTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS TERMS FROM THE REVOLUTION NOR OUR DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL TO THEM. I ALSO WISH TO NOTE THAT EPMG HUMAN RIGHTS VILATIONS HAVE NOT SIGNIFANCTLY AFFECTED ITS ABILITY TO CARRY OUT ITS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (I.E., BETTERING THE HUMAN CONDITION) AND GIVEN ITS UNCONTESTED COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE LOT OF ITS POOREST CITIZENS I DOUBT THAT THE EPMG WOULD ALLOW SUCH A DEVELOPMENT TO OCCUR.

4. I WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT'S THOUGHTS ASAP. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT WE HAVE MADE OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ETHIOPIA CRYSTAL CLEAR AND I HOPE THAT IT IS NOT OUR INTENTION TO DRIVE POINT HOME ON EVERY CONCEIVABLE OCCASION. I UNDERSTAND ANOTHER IDA LOAN FOR ETHIOPIA WILL BE VOTED ON

BY IBRD EXECUTIVE BOARD IN EARLY JUNE. IF WE ARE TO
ABSTAIN AGAIN, I HOPE WE CAN DO SO IN SILENCE.
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